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# TOTAL ABSTINENCE:

FOR THE

## SAKE OF OURSELVES AND OTHERS.

BY

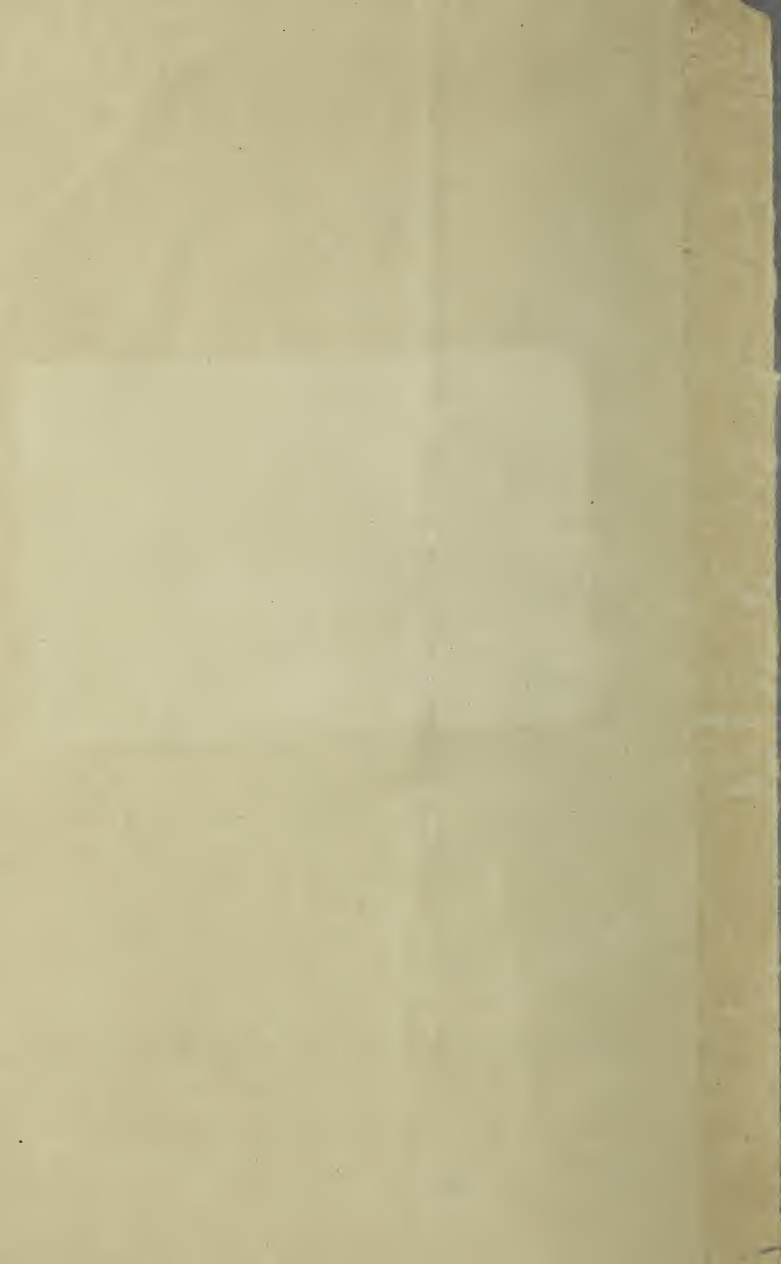
REV. CANON FARRAR, D.D., F.R.S.

A LECTURE DELIVERED IN THE HALL OF THE KING'S COLLEGE,  
CAMBRIDGE, NOVEMBER 19th, 1877.

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# TOTAL ABSTINENCE

FOR THE SAKE OF OURSELVES AND OTHERS.

BY THE REV. CANON FARRAR, D.D., F.R.S.

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THE Rev. Canon FARRAR said:—My Lords, Ladies, and Gentlemen:—It ought to be, and it is, with some trepidation that I rise to address so highly distinguished an audience on a greatly disparaged cause. The secular press tells us that the advocates of total abstinence are impracticable fanatics and wrong-headed Pharisees; the religious press tells us that abstinence is a much poorer stage of virtue than moderation, and that, by declining wine and beer, we fall far below the attainment of those moral athletes who, to their hearts' content indulge themselves in both; even clergymen in their sermons and at the Church Congresses have argued that we are despising a good creature of God, setting ourselves against a precept of St. Paul and cherishing a heresy which is dangerously akin to that of the ancient Manichees. Well, gentlemen, if a cause had no opponents, I for one should think it a grievous waste of time to be among its advocates; and the only thing which reconciles me to the uncongenial task of speaking on the subject is the knowledge that it is unpopular and decried.

And as for these arguments we have had them addressed to us again and again ; and you must pardon me if the utter intellectual disdain with which I regard them, prevents me from doing more than allude to them to-day. When the world in general had abandoned the defense of protection, the forty members of Parliament who still staunchly continued to vote for it were popularly known as the forty cannon-balls ; not many years earlier these forty cannon-balls would have been four hundred cannon-balls, and precisely the same arguments were reiterated by the forty as had once convinced the four hundred. And it is my own firm conviction that these arguments of the anti-abstinence majority will soon become those of the minority. They remind me of nothing so much as the victims of Mr. Punch, in the now rare street show which used to delight our childish days. It is perfectly useless for that hero to knock them on the head and bang them on the floor. They show a wooden vitality which is perfectly inexhaustible. No matter how violently they have been dashed down, and finished off by a final rap, they are sure to start up a moment afterward, wagging their futile heads and shaking their minatory arms ; and even, long after they have been finally disposed of, their ghosts reappear with an exasperating pertinacity. Now as to these objections, if any one likes to call me Manichean because I have become an abstainer, I can only assure him with a smile that I should like him, to the same extent, to adopt the same beneficent heresy. If, in spite of arguments which daily gain in overwhelming cogency,



he tells me that alcohol in moderation is harmless, it is still no more a special duty of mine to drink it than it is a special duty of mine to feed, for instance, on Revalenta Arabica. If I prove to him that to millions of human beings it is not only deleterious, but deadly, I say that to them, and to those who wish to help and save them, it is no more a good creature of God than laudanum or strychnine. And as to the so-called Scriptural arguments in favor of drunkenness—I beg pardon, I mean in favor of moderate drinking; which is, however, ultimately the *fons et origo* of drunkenness—I shall say this only, that wine means primarily the juice, and often as I believe the unfermented juice of the grape; and that the drugged beers, and stupefying porters, and fortified ports, and plaistered sherries, and abominable draughts of liquid fire which are called spirits in England, are no more the pure fruit of the vine than the mariner's compass is intended when we are told that St. Paul fetched a compass and came to Rhegium. Into that Scriptural matter I have no time at present to enter, and indeed to do so would be certainly superfluous to an audience intelligent enough and educated enough to distinguish between the dead letter and the living spirit. Texts have been quoted for centuries in the cause of ignorance and sin. They have been quoted to countenance every absurdity, and check every science, and denounce every moral reformation. They were quoted against Columbus, against Copernicus, against Galileo, against\*the geologists. They were quoted against St. Peter, against St. Paul, against Christ Himself. They

were quoted against Wycliffe, against Luther, against Wilberforce. They have been quoted—quite as often as they now are against the cause of temperance—in defense of polygamy, in defense of oppression, in defense of persecution, in defense of intolerance. But those who oppose us on false deductions from Scripture do not stand alone in resuscitating these slain objections. There is your senator, intrenched in his impregnable aphorism that “you can not make people sober by Act of Parliament;” who is best met, partly, by the direct denial that to a very great extent you can make people sober by Act of Parliament; and, partly, by the entreaty that senates, if they can not make people sober, should at least not continue the very effectual means which prove that you do by Acts of Parliament make them drunken. There is your Man of the World who angrily asks you “What all the noise is about, and why you can not leave him alone?” and who is indeed best left alone, since our arguments are only intelligible to the unselfish and the earnest. There is your defender of the British Constitution, who asks “How you can interfere with the liberty of the subject?” to whom I answer, with J. S. Mill, that the liberty of one man ends where—however profitable to himself—it becomes fatal and ruinous to another; and with Archbishop Whately, that I will gladly curtail my liberty, if thereby I can restrain another’s license. And then lastly, there is a very important person indeed, your Political Economist. You tell him that we are squandering £150,000,000 a year directly (and how awful a sum indirectly, is known to God

alone), in that which he may regard as a harmless luxury, but which we see to be a frightful curse to millions, and which we believe to be in a greater or less degree injurious to all—and what does he do? First he nibbles at the figures; talks about exaggeration; and without saying one word about the indirect cost to the nation of alcohol, says that its direct cost is, after all, “only” £131,000,000; and that of this the working classes spend “only” £36,000,000, and that this is “only” equivalent to what they spend in rent; and that £87,000,000 of the whole sum spent are not lost because they go in duty to the Exchequer and in profits to the liquor trade. Well, gentlemen, I am not a Professor, and perhaps it may only be my ignorance, but I confess that this is a political economy which fairly astounds me. It reminds me of nothing so much as the answer given, it is said, but let us hope not, by an Oxford undergraduate, to the question, “What are the chief sources of revenue to the Shetland Isles?” and who answered that “the inhabitants earned an honest, but somewhat precarious, subsistence by washing one another’s clothes!” But seriously, gentlemen, supposing that this £131,000,000—for in this amazing bill we will not quarrel about a million or two, more or less—were spent not in alcohol, but in fireworks? Would it be an argument to any one who complained that this was a fearful waste, to say that the working classes “only” spent £36,000,000 of it; that fireworks amused them; and that £87,000,000 of it was not lost because it went in duty to the revenue and in profits to the pyrotechnists? It is surely an

amazing conception of national advantage which makes it consist in the mere circulation of money spent in unproductive labor; and any one who knows anything whatever about the Temperance question, knows that the grounds on which we brand as waste this vast consumption of our resources, are grounds for which we at least offer a daily increasing mass of proof; namely, that alcohol is not a food; that it is not a source of warmth; that it is not a source of strength; that it can not even conceivably be a necessity, seeing that our thousands of prisoners gain in health and strength, instead of losing, by its total withdrawal; that there are whole races of men who never touch it; and that the Total Abstiners of England, who now number 4,000,000, are among the healthiest of men; and that, while it is thus absolutely needless, the abuse of it is confessedly and demonstrably the curse and shame of England both at home and abroad, the most fertile and the most potent of all existing causes of degradation and ruin. Well, gentlemen, if these things be so—and whether they are so you can not judge at all till you have at least faced the evidence—then I say deliberately and distinctly that England would be a richer country, a better country, a happier country, a country in all respects more blessed, if alcoholic drink were non-existent, and if £150,000,000 were spent annually on fireworks instead;—for this among other reasons, because the puffing away that magnificent revenue in smoke and flame would not only do us less direct harm, but would also save us from the vast loss caused indirectly to the nation by the

occupation, for hops, of 69,000 acres of our soil; by the destruction, for beer and spirits, of 12,000,000 of bushels of grain; and by the crushing expense of all the pauperism, the lunacy, the crime, the accidents—the burnt houses, the wrecked ships, the exploded collieries, the shattered railway trains—which can be traced directly to drink alone.

Now, gentlemen, I will tell you why I speak of Total Abstinence. I am bidden to-day to point out the claims of the Temperance movement on the Public Schools and Universities, and if by the Temperance movement be merely meant the discountenancing of drunkenness, surely to speak about it would be needless. I suppose that no one here will be likely to act, as I once saw a gentleman act, who sat at a meeting and did not blush to applaud the disgraceful facts and alarming statistics of intemperance. To such an one we could only say,—

“Well spoken advocate of sin and shame,  
Known by thy bleating, Ignorance thy name.”

But I need hardly say that no man would have any shadow of a right to the titles of a Christian and a gentleman—nay, he would brand himself as an enemy to his race—if he did not join, heart and soul, in the wish to check intemperance. If that were all, it would be an insult to your understandings to argue with you that the Temperance movement has claims upon you. Of course it has claims upon you; of course it has claims upon every living man in whose breast beats a human heart. But I shall take the unpopular, Quixotic side, and ask you to consider whether total abstinence has no claims



upon you. I shall not say—I have never said—that it is your duty—or any man's duty—to take so far upon you the vow of the Nazarite; but I shall humbly ask for your unprejudiced consideration, and I shall leave to yourselves the manly decision, while I beg you, for a few moments, to glance at the question with me—first, in its personal, and then in one only of its social aspects.

Let me begin with the very lowest ground of all. I look around me, and I am every day more deeply impressed with the increasing severity of the struggle for life, and the immense difficulty of earning a livelihood by thousands of boys and youths of the upper and professional classes; and I ask whether, under such circumstances, it is not worth a young man's while to make his conditions of life as simple as possible, and to save himself, by a very trivial self-denial, from a very needless and burdensome expense? I tell my poor people that one single pint of beer a day means £3 a year, that three pints a day, which is in most of these families a very moderate allowance, means £9 a year out of their wages, and that would in 20 years with interest become no less than £257, which would buy them a freehold house and garden. I surely may say to many of you who hereafter will not find it so easy to keep the wolf from the door—taking now this very lowest, yet not unimportant ground—that even four glasses of sherry a day in a household (and how many families are there who, if they use it at all, confine themselves to that?) means some ten dozen bottles a year, and that even in a small and struggling clergyman's family of a few

people some twenty pounds can very ill indeed be spared. The day may come when you will not think this a very trivial sum; but trivial or not, it is undesirable if it be a waste, and it is foolish if people are better without it. Now this at least is certain, which is, that to a young man and a healthy man alcohol in any form is needless, even if it be not injurious. I find that even those medical men who write against abstinence are constantly making admissions which tell dead against them. Dr. Burney Yeo wrote strongly against abstinence, yet he says, speaking of precisely the most popular wine of the day, "Dry sherries do an incalculable amount of harm." Dr. Brunton and Dr. Burdon Sanderson, and Sir W. Gull are none of them total abstainers, and the first two are distinctly unfavorable to total abstinence, yet Dr. Brunton says before the Lords' Committee, "If a man eats well and sleeps well, he does not want it, and is better without it." Dr. Burdon Sanderson says, "It is not at all required in health;" and Sir W. Gull, among much more which coming from such a man is of the most immense general and scientific importance, says that the constant use of alcohol, even in moderation, injures the nervous tissue, and is deleterious to health; that a man may very materially injure his constitution short of drunkenness; and that a great deal of injury is done to health by the habitual use of wines in their various kinds, and alcohol in its various shapes, even in so-called moderate quantities, by people of both sexes who are supposed to be fairly well, and who are not in the least intemperate." I could quote to you on the

same side the distinct evidence of Sir H. Thompson, of Dr. Norman Kerr, of Dr. B. W. Richardson, of more than 2,000 physicians in 1846, and of an ever-increasing number of eminent medical men ; but I greatly prefer, and I am quite content to rest it on the spontaneous, the unbiased, often the most unwilling testimony of those who are in no way pledged to total abstinence, and are even in some cases distinctly hostile to it.

So much on the score of health ; and what about strength ? You desire to be athletes, gentlemen ; well, I venture to say to you that you will be all the better and stronger if you are total abstainers. When the workmen in our foundries are doing their heaviest tasks, they drink nothing but oat-meal-water. When Captain Webb swam the Channel, and Weston walked his thousand miles, and Adam Ayles, the Arctic explorer, got nearest to the Pole, they did it without a drop of stimulants ; and I dare say that you have already found out for yourselves that, as Dr. Burdon Sanderson says, "Alcohol is especially injurious in continuous muscular exertion."

And then as to mental work, many of you desire to be students and scholars. Will alcohol help you ? Sir Henry Thompson says that "of all people I know who can not stand alcohol, the brain-workers can do so least." Sir W. Gull tells us that alcohol "degenerates the tissue, and spoils the intellect." Many a man has ruined a fine intellect, as Macaulay tells us that Lord Byron did, by ardent spirits and Rhenish wine ; many a man has polluted with the strange fires of alcohol the vestal



flame on the altar of genius; but in spite of all devil's proverbs to the contrary, no man has ever yet improved it; and the

“Vino forma perit, vino consumitur aetas,”

is as true now as it was in the days of Propertius nearly 2,000 years ago. Gentlemen, I could go on heaping proof on proof that even if alcohol be not positively harmful—even if it do not tend to weaken and degrade the physical organization—it is, at the very best, a needless and a questionable luxury; and therefore one which a young man might, I think, very reasonably despise. But I have something more serious to say. In speaking of the purely personal aspect of the question, I have only glanced at its physical, and have not so much as touched on its moral and spiritual aspects. Now, as regards these, my own belief is that alcohol does tend (if taken very moderately it may be only in an infinitesimal degree, but still does tend) to excite the lower, and to neutralize the spiritual elements in our nature, and that, in myriads who stop far short of being drunkards, it blunts the moral sensibilities, and enslaves the enervated will. And although millions never succumb to these influences, yet millions also do. Do you suppose that there was ever a drunkard since the world began who dreamed, when he first began to quaff

“The foaming vintage of Champagne  
In silver goblets tossed,”

or to do any of the other fine things which our Bacchanalian sons so fatally belaud, that he, too.

would fall into the shame and misery of the drunkard? From the day when Noah planted a vineyard and ate of the fruit thereof—nay, it may be even from the days of Eden if, as the Rabbis say, the vine was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil—from the days when the two sons of Aaron perished at the altar in their intoxication; numberless of the miserable have experienced the fatal physical fact that as long as a drop of alcohol remains in the system, it creates a desire for more; the fatal moral fact that evil habit first allures, then masters, finally maddens and enslaves. At the entrance of one of our college chapels, lies a nameless grave; that grave covers the mortal remains of one of its most promising fellows—ruined through drink. I received, not long ago, a letter from an old schoolfellow, a clergyman, who after long labors was in want of clothes and almost of food. I inquired the cause; it was drink. A few weeks ago a wretched clergyman came to me in deplorable misery, who had dragged down his family with him into ruin. What had ruined him? Drink! When I was at Cambridge, one of the most promising scholars was a youth who, years ago, died in a London hospital penniless, of delirium tremens, through drink. When I was at King's College, I used to sit next to a handsome youth, who grew up to be a brilliant writer; he died in the prime of life, a victim of drink. I once knew an eloquent philanthropist who was a very miserable man. The world never knew the curse which was on him; but his friends knew that it was drink. And why is it that these tragedies are daily happening?

It is through the fatal fascination, the seductive sorcery of drink, against which Scripture so often warns. It is because drink is one of the surest of "the devil's ways to man, and of man's ways to the devil." It is because the old Greek imagination hit upon a frightful truth, when it surrounded the car of Bacchus with half-human satyrs and raving meanads. "I must take care," wrote a great and good man the other day, "for I find myself getting an ugly craving for alcohol;" and what is such a remark but an unconscious comment on Milton's noble lines:

"Bacchus, that first from out the purple grape  
Crushed the sweet poison of misused wine,  
After the Tuscan mariners transformed  
Skirting the Tyrrhene shore as the wind listed  
On Circe's island fell. Who knows not Circe,  
The daughter of the sun, whose charmed cup  
Whoever tasted lost his upright shape,  
And downward fell into a grovelling swine?"

Which things are simply this allegory, that he who loves wine is driven as the wind lists, into a realm of sorcery, and that this sorcery culminates in utter degradation. But you, it may be, are quite sure that you will never fall on Circe's island, or unmould reason's mintage. But why are you so sure? Is your nature so much stronger and nobler than that of Burns', or than that of Hartley Coleridge, or than that of Charles Lamb, with his sad cry, "The waters have gone over me, but out of the depths, could I be heard, I would cry out to all those who have but set a foot in the perilous flood?" Or why are you safer than these 600,000

drunkards in these unhappy islands, many of them men of keen intellect, many of them men of noble instincts, many of them men of most amiable character? How did these men become drunkards? Do you think that they were born drunkards? Do you think that they became drunkards the moment they tasted alcohol? Why, gentlemen, you know that there is only one way by which any man ever became a drunkard, and that is *by growing fond of alcohol*, at first in moderate drinking—either by the glass or by the dram—day by day a little increased—year by year a little multiplied—by the solitary becoming the frequent, and the frequent the habitual, and the habitual the all-but-inevitable transgression; till at last, some fine morning, as they awoke, perhaps in the shame of some inevitable fall, it came upon them with a flash that they are drunkards. This perhaps is the commonest method of ruin.

“We are not worse at once : the course of evil  
Begins so slowly and from such slight source,  
An infant’s hand might stem the breach with clay :  
But let the stream grow wider, and philosophy,  
Aye and religion too, may strive in vain  
To stem the headlong current.”

But it is not always in this slow and gradual manner that men have become drunkards. Sometimes they have been moderate for years, and then at last—when they thought themselves perfectly secure—the temptation has come upon them, “terrible and with a tiger’s leaps”—in the delight of some boon companionship—in the exhilaration of some sudden good fortune, in the agony of some

unexpected bereavement. Gentlemen, if every one of you think yourselves so absolutely and permanently safe from a temptation to which so many millions have succumbed; or if you think that, being absolutely safe yourself, no single person toward whom you have duties and whom you love, no wife, or child, and friend, or servant, or parishioner—can by any possibility be ever tempted by your example, all that I can say is that, while I can not share your confidence, I most earnestly trust that no bitter irremediable experience may ever give you cause to repent of it in dust and ashes.

But now, gentlemen, I will pass entirely from the personal to the social aspect of the question. It has been said that if you are fond of wine you ought to abstain for your own sake, and if you are not fond of wine, you ought to abstain for the sake of others. That may be only an epigram; but yet I do say, gentlemen, that if you could disprove all that I have as yet said to you, I should still try to be a total abstainer. It is as I have said my conviction, deepened by an ever-increasing mass of evidence, that the *tendency* of alcohol is bad for every one morally, intellectually, and spiritually, and that no one can tell whom his example may not injuriously affect:—but even were it otherwise, I should still think it right to abstain. For that alcohol is a *necessity*, except in the very rarest cases, you can not prove. And therefore I should still be a total abstainer *for the sake of others*. For even the very idiot must admit that one evil at least comes from drink—one evil colos-



sal and ruinous—one evil immediately and directly, and therefore in some cases necessarily;—and that is drunkenness—the national drunkenness of this country. It makes my cheeks blush for shame, it makes my heart beat fast with indignation, when I think that this precious, this glorious, this immortal England of ours, is itself one of the most drunken nations, and perhaps the greatest cause of drunkenness in other nations, of all under God's sun. Gentlemen, drunkenness, I grieve to say—for it is a masterstroke of the powers of evil—is too often treated as laughable. Continually it is made a subject of jest in our comic newspapers, and no one can live in London without noticing that it is the favorite jocosity of those wretched comic songs, those deplorably abysmal degradations of all verse and all music, which flow like a stream of vitriol from detestable music halls over the morals of the boys and girls, whom, in our schools and classes, we have striven to win to God. Well, gentlemen, I can not laugh at these jests; I can but look with disgust and abhorrence on these songs. Gentlemen, have you ever seen—if not may you never see!—a young man suffering from delirium tremens? From attempting to describe its horrors I shrink appalled; but you are probably all aware that one of the features of delirium tremens is all kinds of illusions and phantoms. A friend of mine told me the other day, that, finding himself in London, he turned into a tavern for some lunch. As he sat there a dog suddenly ran across the room, and my friend started. "Oh, don't be afraid, sir," said the waiter, coming up to him, "it *was* a

dog, it was a *real* dog, I assure you." At first he could not understand what the man meant; but then it flashed on him with a thrill of horror, that this man in his own person, and in the person of his customers, was familiar with the ghastly illusions of that most terrible of all diseases, which is God's Nemesis upon excess. Well, gentlemen, this being but one of the horrors of that drunkenness, which has its direct and sole origin in drink—are you a Christian—are you a man—can you have a heart in your breast which selfishness has not quite eaten away—if you can, hear without shame and sorrow that, to say nothing of the grocers' licenses, there are 98,955 public houses in England, and that there is scarcely one of these which is not to some a direct inevitable source of terrible temptation—that there are 38,845 beer-shops in England, of which there is scarcely one which is not a direct source of temptation in the neighborhood; that in the year 1875 there were in England alone 203,989 arrests for drunkenness, and 122,913 arrests for assaults, many of these of the loathiest and most diabolically brutal character, connected with drunkenness; making the ghastly total of 326,902 offenses on the score of this sin alone—which yet does not represent one-tenth part of the shame, the ruin, the misery, the loss, the burden, which are directly due to this awful sin? The drunkard, as I have said, is often in his sober moments a high-minded and honorable man, and no amount of physical torture can equal the anguish of moral degradation, in which he knows what he is, and loathes what he is, and yet is what he is by a deadly spell

which he can not break. Drunkards have been known to describe the horror and intensity of this spell, by saying that if a glass of brandy were set before them, and between them and it yawned the very abyss of hell, they still must stretch forth their hands and take it. And the worst of all is the knowledge that these unhappy sinners and victims transmit to their children an hereditary craving, of which those unacquainted with it can not conceive the terrible intensity. Imagine, gentlemen, the case—alas! in the lower classes the very common case!—of the poor unhappy youth, born with this awful tendency. conscious of it, afraid of it, yet not sufficiently braced in moral self-discipline to prevent it from becoming first an allurements, then a mastery, then the tyranny of a remorseless demon. Imagine a man—and such cases are—a man so unhappily constituted by the sins of his fathers, that, for long, long years, from boyhood to the very verge of old age, the soul within him has “to stand and watch like an unsleeping sentinel,” lest at any moment the burning congenital appetite for strong drink should clutch him with hands of fire, and drag him down to the unspeakable horror of the drunkard’s grave!

Well, gentlemen, it is on behalf of these drunkards that I appeal to you; and not for their sakes only, but for the sakes of their little sons and their little daughters, and for the sake of the myriads of those white young souls, which are being at this moment trained in our national schools, and of which nearly all will have to wrestle with this as one of their sorest temptations, and of which many a thousand, if not saved and shielded, will most in-



evitably fall. Remember, gentlemen, I entreat you, that the drunkards of to-day are not the drunkards of to-morrow; that this ignoble and inglorious army of drunkards, as its ranks are thinned by death, is being daily recruited by those who as yet are not drunkards, but who only drink. For myself, supposing that considerations like these had not already induced me to take the pledge, I venture to say that if I were in this hall hearing these facts, and if I knew that, in this hall, there were but one youth or man who would fall hereafter into this horrible abyss, then I should feel it would be well worth the sacrifice of every one of us taking the pledge, if by so doing we could but save that one; it might be a personal blessing to every one of us, but even if not, yet how small would be our loss, how great his gain! and I should think that we were but acting in the spirit of that great apostle who said that he would neither eat meat, nor drink wine, nor anything whereby his brother was made to offend. I have not said, I never shall say, a word against the publicans; I have not said, I never shall say, that it is the duty of any man, not being a drunkard, to take the pledge; but I do say that this is a plain fact, namely, that drunkenness comes of moderate drinking, and that if, as a nation, we would make the vow of abstinence all but universal among us, then drunkenness at any rate, with all its fearful consequences, would be erased from its horrible prominence in the list of our national sins. I have but touched, you will observe, on the mere surface of the subject. I could show you, if time allowed—show you by proofs the most

startling, the most irrefragable—that the liquor traffic stands in the very forefront of responsibility for the alarming amount of lunacy, of pauperism, of crime, and that without this liquor traffic England would be unspeakably different from what now it is—unspeakably more prosperous at home—unspeakably more honored abroad—than it ever has been, or ever can be, while the liquor traffic maintains its present immense and truly deplorable ascendancy. To me it seems, gentlemen, that there is only one remedy which can indefinitely prolong the national glory of England ; there is but one resource which can counteract the dangers which threaten us from the pressure of life, the depression of trade, the growth of a deeply-seated discontent ; that there is but one way to diminish the ghastly total of crime, to close two-thirds of our prisons, two-thirds of our asylums, two-thirds of our work-houses ; and that remedy, that resource, that way is, that instead of continuing to be a drunken, we should become a sober and temperate nation ; and in the present distress, amid the present perils, with the present repeated refusals of the Legislature to interfere with the scandalous multiplication of temptations, there is but one way by which we can ever become a sober and temperate nation, and that is by the immense, the voluntary, the all but universal spread of total abstinence. The day may return—God grant it, and it is very far off as yet—when the present peril and the present distress are over, and England, shamed into decency and startled into repentance, may indulge, if it be an indulgence, and if she must indulge in the fer-

mented juice of the grape, without one word of warning; but that day is not yet, and, meanwhile, do not be deceived into easy self-satisfaction, by a mere talking about rose-water remedies which become practically an excuse for simply doing nothing. People solemnly tell us that we must not fight drunkenness, but must give the poor higher amusements, better houses, more education, and so make them sober. Gentlemen, I have seen something of the poor, and I tell you emphatically that in our present state of things, these remedies will not diminish drunkenness. No one can desire more ardently than I do, that all this should be done; no one feels more indignantly than I do the selfish apathy of rich men, who draw rents from filthy houses where the poor are huddled together like swine; no one can believe more entirely than I do that in general, more education means less vice. But I say, first diminish drunkenness and then try these remedies, or you will be utterly defeated:

“What, have ye let the fond enchanter 'scape?  
Oh, ye mistook! ye should have snatch'd his wand  
And bound him fast. Without his rod reversed,  
And backward mutters of dissevering power,  
We can not free the lady, who sits here  
In stony fetters fixed and motionless!”

And this, gentlemen,—total abstinence—this is the snatched wand, the rod reversed, the backward mutters of dissevering power. Without this, all the boons you give to the poorer class will be turned gradually into banes; with it the boons will come, and come far more effectually of themselves. As drunkenness has already turned into a bane the

boon of better wages and more frequent holidays, so it would soon turn your better houses into scenes of degradation, and fill your places of amusement with reeling sots. Make the working-classes sober, as our Legislature, and our upper classes if they were utterly in earnest might do; induce them to give up the horrible waste of drink and drunkenness; and you may depend upon it that the other boons would come spontaneously—that the working-classes would very soon provide the better houses, and higher amusements, and more education for themselves. And this is emphatically the work, emphatically the reform which this age has to achieve; and, for those at any rate who work among the poor, total abstinence is the only way to do it. If the clergyman takes his glass of sherry, on plea of fatigue or exhaustion, you may depend upon it that the working-man will go on the same pretext to the publican for his glass of gin; and if he reads his Shakespeare, he will say to the clergyman, who wants to win him from drunkenness:

“ But, good my brother,  
Do not as some ungracious pastors do,  
Point me the steep and stormy path to heaven;  
While, like a puffed and reckless libertine,  
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,  
And recks not his own rede.”

Gentlemen, our fathers had to go to the stake for freedom of conscience, and to shed their blood for civil liberty, and to bear obloquy in founding missions, and reforming prisons, and furthering education, and purging England from the infamies of the slave trade. What *we* have to do, what this age

has to do, what every brave and true and good man in this generation has to do, is to save England from the stain and shame, from the curse and ruin of drunkenness, a curse far deadlier than that of neglected prisons, far deadlier than that of injured slaves. Will you do it? or will you make the great refusal? If you have to bear a little blatant ridicule in doing it, so much the better. If the people who extol the cheap and easy virtues of imbibing beer and wine, pity you from the heights of their serene superiority—tell them that this sort of virtue, which consists in doing what we like, because we like it, is one which can never mount to the height of your disdain. Gentlemen; no reform worth having was ever carried except in the teeth of clenched antagonists; and most reformers, though we build statues to them now, have had to

“Stand pilloried on infamy’s high stage,  
And bear the pelting scorn of half an age.”

And those who carry, or who help to carry, this reform—they too, will live in the grateful recollection of posterity. The name of Sir Wilfrid Lawson will be honored, when those of half our little politicians sleep in the dust of Hansard. The names of Canon Ellison and Canon Hopkins will be remembered when half the fuglemen of our petty schisms are consigned to fortunate oblivion. The name of Dr. Richardson will be honored when the place of a hundred fashionable physicians knows them no more. Not for one moment do I—I, a late convert, whose attention was lately aroused to this



question by a short experience of work among the London poor—presume to pluck the most withered leaf of that civic garland which *ob civis servatos* these gentlemen have so richly deserved; but will not some of you, who are young, array yourselves in this great cause—continue this great battle—take the places of us who already “think with a diminished fire, and speak with a diminished force?”

“Exoriare aliquis nostris ex ossibus ultor.”

It may be the fate of some of you to die before you have ever really, or in any high sense lived; some of you may become cynics in thought, and pessimists in morals, and spend pernicious lives in trying—though you might as well try to throw dust at heaven and stain it—in trying to ridicule the faith and the aims of the saints of God; some of you may sell your souls for vulgar successes, and pitch your tents on the dead levels of selfish respectability, or the sluggish flats of base content; but, oh, will none of you, sweeping aside the wretched sophisms which infest this question, see that sacrifice, born not for self, but for others, is always sacred; and will you not, for the sake of the solidarity of man, give yourselves to that high task of social amelioration of which this is the most pressing and the most important element? “*Illi*,” says the *Imitatio Christi*, “*illi sunt vere fideles tui qui totas vitas suas ad emendationem disponunt*,” and surely the *emendatio* of God’s noblest nation is a work even more sacred than the *emendatio* of ourselves. And at present there is no other way so

brief, so essential, so emphatic, as to show what you think by example as well as by precept, and by giving up what is at the very best an infinitesimal advantage to take your part against an infinite calamity. Your doing so may cause a laugh; it may bring on you a sneer at a dinner-party; but, if you be still young, it may save you, personally, from a degrading peril; and it will pledge you personally to a glorious cause. Many will tell you that the plan is Quixotic, Utopian, hopeless. These, gentlemen, are missiles of commonplace launched from the catapults of selfishness, and I have generally observed that the cause at which they are leveled is generally a good cause, and almost always a cause which at last has won. But, at any rate, this I do say from the very deepest conviction, that if this be a hopeless cause, then the cause of England is hopeless; and if this be a losing battle, then the battle of England too is lost. But I prophesy that, on the contrary, it is a cause which will triumph, and a battle which shall be won. Give us the impetuosity of your youth; give us the glow of your enthusiasm; give us the freshness of your lives. Remember that the heroes and the demigods were they who rid the earth of monsters; think of the monsters against which you have to fight; the miseries from which you have to deliver; the multitudes which you have to convince; the banded interests which you must help to overthrow. There, in your sight, lies the dark tower of vice and prejudice which you have to storm, "the round squat turret blind as the fool's heart." God give some of you grace to help in

the storm of it, were it ten times as impregnable as it is! Many have died in the apparently forlorn hope of its assault; but I will trust that there may even now be sitting, listening, among you, one who will yet live to do it, and will, in a far less dangerous cause, make his vow in the spirit of the young knight in the great poem, surrounded by the phantoms of the lost adventurers, his peers:

“ There they stood, ranged along the hill-side—set,  
To see the last of me—a living flame  
For one more picture. In a sheet of flame  
I saw them, and I knew them all; and yet  
Dauntless the slughorn to my lips I set,  
**And** blew ‘Childe Roland to the dark tower came.’



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